

In the Claims

Please substitute the following claims 1, 3 and 6 for claims 1, 3 and 6 now pending in the above-identified application.

Please cancel claim 2 without prejudice to the filing of future continuing applications.

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated protein which comprises an amino acid sequence ~~represented by~~ of SEQ ID NO: 1, or a salt thereof.

Claim 2 (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for producing the protein of Claim 1 ~~or the partial peptide of Claim 2~~, or a salt thereof, which comprises culturing a transformant transformed with a recombinant vector comprising DNA encoding for the protein of Claim 1 ~~or the partial peptide of Claim 2~~ and forming the protein ~~or the partial peptide~~.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Withdrawn) A method of screening a compound or a salt thereof which comprises administering said compound to a non-human mammal deficient in said protein of claim 1 or salt thereof and then observing and measuring a change in said mammal.

6. (Currently Amended) A kit for screening for a compound or a salt thereof promoting or inhibiting the activity of the protein of Claim 1 ~~or the partial peptide of Claim 2~~, or a salt thereof, which comprises the protein of Claim 1 ~~or the partial peptide of Claim 2~~, or a salt thereof.

Claims 7 - 10 (Cancelled)